

## *Parenting New Year's resolutions!*

Setting New Year's resolutions for yourself is a great idea. But make sure you include resolutions on parenting your child, because you are the single biggest influence on your child and their future. Your child will emulate your behavior, so watch out for the following traits in yourself:

**Honesty:** Make sure you are as honest as you want your child to be. Don't lie to your children or in front of them. Don't excuse acts of dishonesty or deception by stating that this is an exception. Don't be a hypocrite. Avoid putting down negative behaviors that you yourself do, such as speeding, drinking or smoking. Demonstrate your moral convictions by paying whatever price is necessary to do what is right, such as inconvenience, loss of money, approval and even employment.

**Respect:** Listen and respect your children's views. Demonstrate self-restraint and maintain your own self-discipline with respect to violence, yelling or other displays of temper. Use only the language you want your children to use. Avoid petty behavior and power plays especially where your children are concerned. Mutual respect is an essential quality in any parent/child relationship. This respect must be nurtured continuously to build and maintain a happy, healthy relationship.

**Responsibility:** Admit when you are wrong and take whatever consequences are coming to you when you are wrong, and expect the same from your children. Don't shift blame and excuse your own shortcomings or mistakes and expect the same from your children. Assign reasonable age-appropriate responsibilities to your kids and assign consequences if they fail to perform their duties. Make sure that your children keep their commitments at home, at school and in extracurricular activities. This means if you say you will do something you follow through, just as you expect your child to do.

**Fairness:** General rules of fairness are necessary to keep peace in any household. Make sure you don't resort to arbitrary power to get your way. Treat your children equally and fairly and be open to reasonable discussion and criticism.

**Caring:** Children are stakeholders in everything you do, so demonstrate compassion and respect for others, especially for your children. Never discount, belittle or trivialize your children's feelings or fears. Be visibly charitable and involve your children in charities to support. Getting your kids to give back to their community or to those less fortunate than themselves is something that will enrich their lives for years to come, start early and stay consistent.

The way you live your life will be remembered and copied by your children, so strive to be proud of your actions each and every day. If you do make a mistake use it as an opportunity to take responsibility, forgive yourself, acknowledge it as a mistake and use it as a teachable moment. Kids and adults alike should persevere through setbacks and strengthen the above principles to improve the relationships with those we love!

